



Glanford Middle School Newsletter

December 15, 2011



Hello **GMS** Families! On behalf of the entire **GMS** staff, we wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Students and staff have worked hard and everyone is ready for a break!

Take time to enjoy one another at this special time of year. With today being the last day of classes prior to Winter Break, we wanted to share some important information with you regarding upcoming dates of importance in January 2012.

Mark your calendar for:

- Tuesday, January 3rd, 2012 – school reopens after Winter Break
- Tuesday, January 10th –GMS PAC meeting, 7 PM in the library – all parents welcome

Congratulations to our GMS Musicians!

We wish to congratulate all of the wonderful **GMS** musicians for treating us to a magnificent musical performance to kick off the month of December. The dedication the students have made in band is remarkable, and the music they shared with a capacity audience is outstanding – great job everyone! Thanks so much to **Ms. Gerrits and Ms. Toczak**, our talented music teachers, for their wonderful teaching of these students. Additionally, many thanks to the hosts - **Mr. Gerhardt, Fabian Duque-Park, Mr. Shires, Mrs. McKillop and numerous GMS staff** for their contributions to the evening.

Pancake Breakfast, Pajama Day, and Community Support



Yesterday, we held our annual Pancake Breakfast and Pajama Day! In an effort to “go green”, students were asked to bring their own plates and cutlery for the event. We are determined as a school to REDUCE and ELIMINATE unnecessary garbage. The **Central Saanich Lions** once again generously cooked up a storm for all of us to enjoy! A tremendous thank you goes out to the **GMS** PAC for all of their support of this event.

The entire GMS learning community is to be congratulated for the generous contributions made to various charities. We have been collecting non-perishable foods for the **St. Vincent de Paul. Mrs. Rushton’s grade 7 class** also presented the **St. Vincent de Paul** charity with a donation of OVER \$700, raised by the sale of gingerbread cookies. Our **Me to We** student leadership group has organized the **Socks for the Homeless** campaign, collecting toothpaste, tooth brushes, deodorant, shampoo, combs, and other personal items, and wrapping them in warm socks – perfect for the Holiday Season. At GMS, being socially responsible citizens is a goal that we take seriously. The whole experience has been heartwarming.

The Victoria Junior Field Hockey Association

offers a Spring Field Hockey League for players aged 4 to 18.

- 10 week season, starting 31 March 2012
- Divisions for boys and girls
- Come Try the Game Free Days! UVIC Turf Fields near McKinnon Gym
 - Sunday, 5 February 2012
 - Sunday, 4 March 2012

For more information, please visit www.victoriajuniorfieldhockey.ca or email info@victoriajuniorfieldhockey.ca
Registration opens 12 January 2012.



Gr. 7/8 Girls Basketball—City Champions!

Our fans were FANTASTIC—rocking the house—and our girls were great as the Girls’ Basketball Team won their first City Championship. The mighty MAVS went into the PCS Gym to play a big, fast, first, undefeated PCS Pacers Team—the only team our 13—1 girls have lost to this season. Smothering team defence and relentless fast break offence proved too much for the Pacers as GMS prevailed 53-30. Congratulations girls!

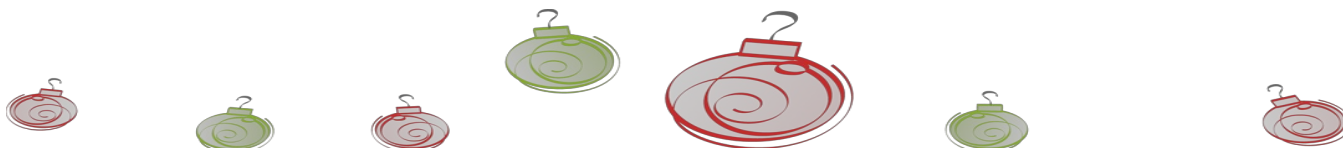


Tuesday, February 21st 2012 – A special day of recreation for GMS students!

Although it is some time away, we wanted to let families know that we are planning a special day for **GMS** students on Tuesday, February 21st, 2012. Collectively, the GMS PAC and the GMS Staff are cognizant of the challenging financial times that families are experiencing. We are aware that a day at Mt. Washington can be an additional expense to some families that they cannot afford. Although this is true, it has become very apparent to us that the annual one day ski trip to Mt. Washington is an event that our community very much appreciates having, as it is the only chance in a calendar year that many of our students would have to enjoy a day of skiing. As in years gone by, the annual **GMS** ski trip is an optional day of recreation for our students. All students will be given the option of attending the one day ski trip to Mt. Washington on that day, or, if they prefer, spend the day at the school. Students choosing to be at school that day will have some time built into the day for recreational activities. Further Information regarding the ski trip will be coming home the first week in January, with forms due at the school no later than Friday, January 27th, 2012.

Merry Christmas Everyone! Have a safe, wonderful holiday and see you January 3rd, 2012!

Louie Scigliano, Principal
Elaine Wooster, Vice-Principal



Middle Years

Working together for school success



Short Stops

Holiday teamwork

If your family celebrates a winter holiday, invite your tween to help with preparations. The bonding time can create special memories. You might work side-by-side to bake, wrap gifts, or decorate. Let your child know how much you enjoy her company—and her help!

Be a travel agent

Boost your youngster's imagination and research skills. Ask him to pretend he's traveling back in time to drum up tourism for an ancient city like Troy or Alexandria. He can read books and websites to learn what might attract visitors (theater performances, athletic competitions, poetry readings) and then design a travel brochure.

Hygiene habits

Middle school is a good time for you and your children to evaluate their hygiene routines. At this age, they'll start to sweat more, so they'll need to work harder to keep their skin clean. Introduce habits like washing their faces morning and night and wearing deodorant.

Worth quoting

"Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information on it."

Samuel Johnson

Just for fun

Q: What's the worst thing that can happen to a geography teacher?

A: Getting lost.



Acts of kindness

It's free, it can be big or small, and it can make your child feel good whether she gets it or gives it away. What is it? Kindness!

Middle graders who are considerate get along better with classmates and adults. They also tend to be happier and feel better about themselves. Foster kindness with these ideas.



Talk about why

Tell your child that when you help others, it benefits you as well as the person you're helping. You can get your mind off your own problems and feel good about making a difference. Plus, kindness makes life better for people in your youngster's school and community. Ask her to look for examples (a teacher helping parents learn English, a neighbor clearing snow from community sidewalks).

Take action

Encourage your middle grader to be kind whenever possible. For example, if there is a new student in her classes, ask her how she might feel if she was new. Putting herself in someone else's shoes makes it easier to be compassionate.

Then, she can think of ways to make the new girl feel welcome, such as introducing herself or sitting with her at an assembly. Also, suggest that she ask the school counselor if her school provides ways to help others (collecting books for needy children, for instance) and then participate.

Celebrate kindness

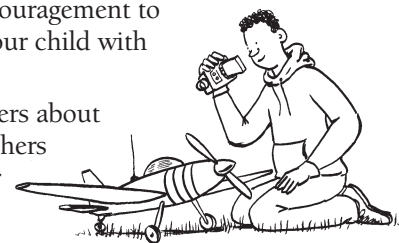
Highlight your child's kind behavior when you see it. You might say, "That was so nice of you to put away your brother's laundry while he's sick." Or declare "Kindness Week" at your house. Family members can write down random acts of kindness they see each other do. At the end of the week, take turns reading them out loud at dinner. Try to guess which family member did each one. 👍

Achievement boosters

Middle schoolers sometimes need extra encouragement to do their best. Create learning enthusiasm in your child with strategies like these:

- Suggest that your youngster talk to his teachers about creative approaches to assignments. Some teachers may allow students to use different formats for projects. For example, your teen might make a video, do a slide show, or interview an expert.

- Encourage him to use subjects he likes to help him do better in those he's less enthusiastic about. If he loves science but isn't fond of writing, for instance, he might write a science fiction story for a creative-writing assignment. 👍



Passing the test

A test can show your child—and his teacher—how much he has learned. But if he gets confused by the way a question is phrased or leaves an important point out of an essay, his grade might not reflect what he knows.

Share these techniques for tackling different types of questions with confidence.

True or false

- Read the whole statement. If any part is incorrect, the answer is “false.” The entire statement must be accurate for the answer to be “true.”
- Take a guess. If there’s no penalty for wrong answers, select the answer that makes the most sense, even if you’re not sure. You have a 50 percent chance of getting it right.



Multiple choice

- Predict the answer. Before you read the choices, have an answer in mind. You’re less likely to get tripped up by answers that aren’t quite right.
- Consider “all of the above.” If you’re sure more than one of the responses is correct, then all of them may be right.

Essay

- Identify key words. Pay attention to whether the question calls for you to “compare,” “analyze,” “summarize,” or “explain.” Base your answer on what you are being asked to do.
- Make an outline. Having a quick plan will help you focus on the main ideas and not forget a point you want to make in your answer. 👍

Parent to Parent

Which activity?



When my son Peter started middle school, I wanted him to find an after-school activity so he could try something new.

I suggested that he get a list of activities from the school office. He also talked to his buddies about groups they participated in. We were both surprised at the variety! There was a foreign-language club, drama program, yearbook staff, and debate team.



My son went through the list and starred the ones he most wanted to try. Together, we went over the time commitment for each of his favorites.

Peter decided to join the yearbook staff with his friend Ratul, and so far, he loves it. I’m happy he’s involved in a new activity, and he’s excited to be busy after school. 👍

Technology time-out

Between TV, computers, and phones, most teens and tweens spend a lot of time using technology. Try these tips to encourage moderation:

- Set an example by unplugging on purpose. You might put your cell phone away during dinner and shut down your laptop while your family is watching a movie together. Explain that you can’t pay attention to family while you’re texting or emailing.
- Make it clear that homework comes first. Consider checking finished work before your child turns on the TV or plays a video game. If she’s using a computer for homework, she should sign out of instant-message programs and social-networking sites.
- Have a screen-time limit—experts recommend no more than two hours a day—and let your middle grader decide how to use it (texting, surfing the Internet). You might insist that she spend one hour being active (walking the dog, shooting baskets) for each hour she spends in front of a screen. 👍



Q & A Young love

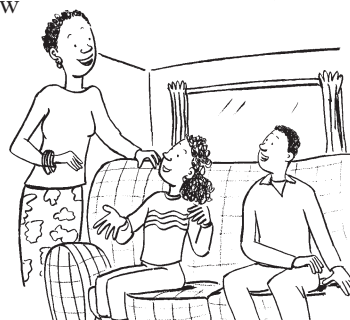
Q My eighth-grade daughter has her first boyfriend, and they see each other a lot. How should I handle the situation?

A Let your daughter know that you’re happy for her. She’ll be more likely to come to you with questions or concerns if she feels like you’re on her side.

Consider making rules about where she and her boyfriend can go. You might insist on group

dates in public places, like roller skating or movies with friends. Also, encourage her to invite him home so you can get to know this special person in her life.

Tell your daughter that even though she wants to be with him, it’s important for her to spend time with family, too. Also, she should continue talking to her girlfriends and hanging out with them. If she “drops” them for her boyfriend, she could end up losing valuable friendships. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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